

REMARKS

The Examiner has not indicated whether the drawings filed with the application on March 26, 2001, have been accepted. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner make such an acknowledgement.

In this Amendment, claim 1 has been amended to be a process claim, reciting steps including --removing excess powders by air blowing--. This amendment is supported by the specification at, for example, page 6, 2nd full paragraph.

Claims 2-6 which are dependent from claim 1 have also been amended, accordingly.

No new matter has been added and thus, entry of the Amendment is respectfully submitted to be proper. Upon entry of the present Amendment, claims 1-6 will be all the claims pending in the application.

In Paragraph No. 4 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite.

Regarding the phrase "removal ... by air blowing" in claim 1, Applicants respectfully submit that its meaning is reasonably clear, which means that excess powders are blown off by the means of blowing air. In the Amendment, Applicants have amended claim 1 to delete the phrase "high efficiency is attained."

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the §112 rejection.

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 09/816,342

In Paragraph No. 5 of the Office Action, claims 1-6 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Laurent (US 4,346,189), individually or in view of JP 200258628 A.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-6 as amended are not obvious over Laurent, individually or in view of JP '628. As mentioned above, in the Amendment, Applicants have amended claims 1-6 to be process claims, reciting a step of removing excess powder by air blowing. However, the cited references do not disclose or suggest such a removal step.

Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the §103(a) rejection.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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CUSTOMER NUMBER

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